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A new approach for the electrophoretic detection of apoptosis.

Eldadah BA, Yakovlev AG, Faden AI.

Department of Neurology and the Georgetown Institute for Cognitive and Computational Sciences, Georgetown University Medical Center, Washington, DC 20007, USA.

Apoptotic cell death is often characterized by internucleosomal cleavage of genomic DNA, which exhibits a distinctive ladder upon electrophoresis. However, techniques used for the isolation and detection of DNA to demonstrate laddering may not be sufficiently sensitive, particularly when cleaved DNA is present at modest levels. We propose a new approach for isolating total cellular DNA using a silica-based resin that improves the resolution of DNA laddering. In addition, we introduce a rapid DNA labeling method that can increase the sensitivity of detecting DNA laddering. Each of these methods can be used for DNA from cell cultures or tissues.

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